

COUNTRY Eastern GermanyTOPIC Military Information from the Weisswasser Troop Training GroundsEVALUATION see below

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DATE OF CONTENT July to 13 September 1952

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DATE PREPARED 14 October 1952

REFERENCES _____

PAGES 3 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) _____

REMARKS _____

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1. During the period from 3 to 12 September 1952, Camp Nochten at the Weisswasser (O 52/A 74) troop training grounds was occupied to capacity by soldiers who wore red-bordered black epaulets with tank, artillery, signal or motor transport insignia. At 7 a.m. on 7 September, [redacted] proceeded from the camp to the Weisswasser railroad station where they were loaded on a train which left about 2:20 p.m. toward Spremberg escorted by 3 officers and 12 men. At 11:20 a.m. on 9 September, 8 officers and 60 men who wore red-bordered black epaulets and carried rifles, rucksacks and blankets proceeded from the Weisswasser railroad station to the troop training grounds. Activities observed at the troop training grounds during the reported period included advanced combat practice, firing with rifles and AT guns in addition to firing practices with live ammunition by 6 JS-3 tanks whose crews were changed, throwing of hand grenades, combat training and firing with heavy machine guns in details from 20 to 80 men. On 9 September, 2 T-34/85 tanks and about 40 infantry soldiers practiced an attack. Details of 20 soldiers followed each tank and fired with submachine guns and rifles. About 130 men and 2 other T-34/85 tanks and 1 model SU-122 gun were seen nearby. It appeared that these soldiers were scheduled to perform the same training. Six officers and 70 men were dug in at the edge of a woods north of Nelkenberg, where they were attacked by 8 T-34 tanks. The officers instructed the soldiers on how to destroy the moving tanks with close combat weapons. [redacted]

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2. On 8 September, 60 men wearing red-bordered black epaulets and armed with 20 heavy machine guns marched from Weisswasser toward Camp Nochten. On 10 September, a column of trucks loaded with signal equipment and EM wearing black-bordered black epaulets with signal insignia proceeded from the direction of Rietschen toward Camp Nochten. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] At 8 a.m. on 12 September, several companies were observed firing with live ammunition from machine guns and carbines. The soldiers wore gas masks. Sections of the training area were blanketed by a smoke screen. Firing by tanks and AT guns was heard on the same day from the direction of the artillery range. [REDACTED]

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3. During the period from early July to early September 1952, [REDACTED] the following information on the Weisswasser troop training grounds:

During the summer months, about 20,000 men and numerous tanks, mostly JS tanks were stationed at the troop training grounds. A tank parking lot with about 100 JS-3 tanks and numerous trucks well camouflaged by branches and some of them protected by revetments was observed in the wooded area on the south side of the Buttermilch Hills. In mid-July, about 2,000 men armed with rifles, submachine guns and machine guns were seen marching on the Baerwalde-Schoepsdorf-Uryst highway toward Klitten. The unit deployed several times while marching. During these deployments, signal soldiers constructed telephone lines and then dismantled them. After each deployment there was a short critique whereupon the march was then resumed.

4. At 10 a.m. on 17 August, about 30 two-axle armored vehicles were observed in the area 1 km northeast of Sprey. The vehicles occupied by 4 to 14 men who wore red-bordered black epaulets with tank insignia were utilized for instructional driving. Each of the vehicles mounted a heavy machine gun fitted on a swivel. All of the vehicles had a rear door [REDACTED] At 4 p.m. on 25 August, about 70 armored half-track vehicles utilized for instructional driving were observed west of the Spree River in the area between Baerwalde and Schoepsdorf. Each vehicle was occupied by 5 to 10 men who wore red-bordered black epaulets with tank insignia. The half-tracks mounted a light gun with a barrel about 2 meters long. [REDACTED]

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5. On 19 August, a column of about 100 trucks, 21 of them towing 57-mm AT guns and all of them occupied by about 15 men wearing red-bordered black epaulets with tank insignia proceeded from Weisswasser to Nochten. [REDACTED]

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In mid-August, boards were trucked to Camp Nochten. An area of about 4 hectares was covered with these boards. The area was allegedly to be made into a drill ground. On 30 August, about 50 men were working on the construction of a road from the camp west of Nochten to the Nochten-Boxberg highway. In early September, this new connecting road which was about 4.5 meters wide, was nearing completion. *

6. In July and August, 37-mm AA guns were repeatedly seen firing at towed air sleeves. Twelve to 15 AA guns were seen mounted on semicircular crosshead guides on the north and northeast sides of the Buttermilch Hills. The crosshead guide was about 3 meters wide and the individual AA guns were 25 to 40 meters apart. *

7. On 28 July, 8 boxcars were loaded with billeting equipment, baggage and bicycles at the Uhyst railroad station. A fragment of an envelope addressed to a soldier [redacted] was found there. [redacted] **

8. [redacted] officers from the Dissenchen Kaserne, the Sachsen-dorf Kaserne, the Hermann Loens Kaserne and the Alvensleben Kaserne in Cottbus and from Spremberg and Luebben at the Weisswasser troop training grounds. [redacted] determined that Colonel Rybakov (fnu) who wore a tank insignia was a division commander. On 4 September, [redacted] that the paybook of Major Matsvaha (fnu) who [redacted]

[redacted] that year [redacted] The division headquarters of the unit which was stationed at Camp Nochten was quartered in the southern section of this camp, 500 to 800 meters north of Boxberg. Truck [redacted] was seen at the camp. ***

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